



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS & TECHNICAL
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GEORGIA MONITORING PROJECT

**U.S. Department of State Fourth
Annual
Conference on Program Evaluation
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MONITORING & EVALUATION: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Providing Technical Services for Public Affairs in Georgia



Presentation Objectives:



To present:

- How GMP and Public Affairs worked together to move from planning to monitoring
- What monitoring can be done with staff and time constraints
- The two sides of the same coin



Why GMP is working with the Public Affairs Section (PAS):



Due to a rapid needs assessment:

- Desk review
- Key informant interviews in Washington
- Key informant interviews in Tbilisi
- Priorities of the 4 Sector Assistance Working Groups
- Eagerness of Public Affairs staff



The Public Affairs Portfolio:



Wide-ranging program, such as:

- Institutional Support Program
- Democracy Commission Small Grants
- Democracy Outreach Alumni Small Grants
- Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Program
- Media Program
- Civic Participation Program

= A LOT WITH FEW STAFF



The 3 Challenges:



When “there’s no time & staff for M&E”:

1. Analysis Paralysis: M&E is overwhelming
2. Knowledge Blockage: Indicators!!
Targets!!
3. Measure Displeasure/Dilemma:
What? How? “We can’t measure the progress of small grants”
“We can’t measure humanitarian/emergency projects?”

= NOT KNOWING WHERE TO START



Responding to the Challenges:



1. Analysis Paralysis: start something
2. Knowledge Blockage: learn as we go
3. Measure Displeasure: nothing succeeds like success
4. Aiming to:
 - Measure results to date/review of processes (i.e. humanitarian projects)
 - Provide information for evidence-based management decision making
 - Preserve USG staff “memory”

= SOMETHING IS BETTER THAN NOTHING



The Planning – What was needed:



According to the baseline, PAS required:

- A simple, customized, operational M&E Plan
- A Results Framework (RF) for each program
- Relevant and appropriate indicators
- Reasonable and measurable targets
- A timetable/calendar for monitoring/implementation



The M&E Plan:



Tips for establishing an operational M&E Plan:

- Group similar projects together (program)
- Prepare a Results Framework for each program
- Devise a FEW indicators for each program (not for each project)
- Set targets (it's OK to leave some blank – for now)
- 100% perfect is not our aim (we will be continuously modifying the plan, indicators, RF, & targets)



The M&E Plan:



Ask questions, such as:

- What happened before the program?
- How will we know if it is successful?
- What do we want to know?
- Can we measure it?
- Would we do the same again?

**= HOW WILL M&E HELP US MAKE
STRATEGIC DECISIONS?**



What PAS liked about their M&E Plan:



- It set priorities for monitoring programs
- It provided a timetable/calendar
- They knew what they wanted to know – it was documented
- 6 programs sounded less daunting than 136 projects/grants
- GMP was doing it for them BUT explaining how and why and working together – BY continually asking PAS questions

= GMP MENTORING



Moving from Planning to Monitoring:



EXAMPLE 1: Institutional Support Program (ISP)

- GMP conducted a mid-term assessment for 3 institutions concurrently (i.e. one report)
- PAS established a timetable of meetings
- Methodology refined using M&E Plan – and PAS devised 5 key questions
- GMP devised list of core interview questions
- GMP conducted interviews in 1 week

M&E PLAN = NO DELAY IN MONITORING



Evidence-based Management Decisions:



What we learned from EXAMPLE 1 (ISP):

- It only took a week (+ report writing time)
- We could revise the M&E Plan – e.g. targets
- What was working well & why in each institution
- What needed to be improved in each institution for the next 2 years

= “WOW, WE DIDN’T KNOW THAT!”



Moving from Planning to Monitoring:



EXAMPLE 2: Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

- GMP conducted a synthesis of all 25 grants, using grantee reports
- Period: FY09 funding; 2010 implemented
- Used M&E Plan – indicators, RF, targets – plus additional issues of interest

= STATISTICS + STORIES



Evidence-based Management Decisions:



What we learned from EXAMPLE 2 (small grants)

- Delay in receiving reports from grantees
- Variable quality of reporting
- But there were common issues & trends
- The Grantee Reporting Form needed updating to ASK what we want to know
- What processes to revise & refine for next call for proposals

= **"WE SHOULD'VE ASKED THEM TO RECORD THAT"**



Lessons Learned:



- We were surprised at how much we found out
 - Common issues
 - Trends
 - Useful statistics
- We were surprised at how much we could apply
 - To the program – changing report formats
 - To other programs – what we ask/targets
 - To our beneficiaries – for further support
 - To funding decisions – more/less
 - To future M&E – being creative



Lessons Learned (continued):



- We were surprised at how much we learned and built our capacity
 - Asking questions
 - Defining key questions
 - Setting targets
 - Reporting formats
 - How we can modify the M&E Plan and reports



Two Sides to the Same Coin:



- Building program evaluation capacity for PAS
 - M&E & streamlining procedures
 - Evidence-based management decisions
 - Key questions & indicators
 - Telling the bigger picture from the sum of the parts
- Building capacity of beneficiaries
 - Budgeting, monitoring, reporting
 - Planning ahead
 - Working toward sustainability/handover
 - Self-monitoring/self-evaluations



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